

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed February 24, 2006. Claims 1-13 were pending in the Application (Claims 14-27 having been withdrawn from consideration). In the Office Action, Claims 1-13 were rejected. In order to expedite and advance the prosecution of the present Application, Applicants amend Claims 1 and 9, and Applicants add new Claims 28-33. Thus, Claims 1-13 and 28-33 and remain pending in the Application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

In the Office Action, the following actions were taken or matters were raised:

SPECIFICATION OBJECTIONS

The Examiner objected to the title of the invention. In this regard, the Examiner states that the “title of the invention is not descriptive” (Office Action, page 4). Applicants respectfully disagree. However, Applicants have amended the title to recite “Test Apparatus for an Electronic Circuit Assembly having a Plurality of Probes.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

SECTION 102 REJECTION

Claims 1-6 and 9-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,404,215 issued to Nightingale et al. (hereinafter “*Nightingale*”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Of the rejected claims, Claims 1 and 9 are independent. Applicants respectfully submit that *Nightingale* does not disclose or even suggest each and every limitation of amended independent Claims 1 and 9. *Nightingale* appears to disclose a probe having first and second probing tips 50 and 52 (*Nightingale*, column 2, lines 60-64, figure 2). *Nightingale* also appears to disclose a probing tip holder 80 that the Examiner appears to equate to the “support member” recited by Claim 1 (Office Action, page 3 (*Nightingale*, column 3, line 66 to column 4, line 20,

figure 4)). *Nightingale* appears to disclose probing tips 60 and 62 that are coupled to the tip holder 80 of *Nightingale*, and that the tip holder 80 has bores 82 and 84 that have a center-to-center spacing that matches the center-to-center spacing of probing tips 50 and 52 of *Nightingale* such that, when the holder 80 is placed over and onto the probing tips 50 and 52 (i.e., probing tips 50 and 52 slid into bores 82 and 84), the probing tips 60 and 62 are offset (e.g., having a greater center-to-center spacing) from the probing tips 50 and 52 (*Nightingale*, column 4, lines 1-19, figures 2 and 4). Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that *Nightingale* does not disclose or even suggest “a plurality of probes, each probe adapted to contact a corresponding test area of an electronic circuit assembly” and a “probe assembly having a plurality of probes configured to contact test areas of the electronic circuit assembly different than the test areas contacted by the probes of the support member” where “a spacing density of the probes of the probe assembly is greater than a spacing density of the probes of the support member” as recited by amended Claim 1. In fact, when the holder 80 is placed over the probing tips 50 and 52 of *Nightingale*, the probing tips 50 and 52 of *Nightingale* would not contact any test area, much less a test area “different than the test areas contacted by the [probe assembly]” as recited by Claim 1. Therefore, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that *Nightingale* does not anticipate amended Claim 1.

Independent Claim 9 recites “second probe means coupled to the support means and configured to contact test areas on the electronic circuit assembly different than the test areas contacted by the first probe means, the second probe means having a spacing density of probes greater than a spacing density of probes of the first probe means” emphasis added). At least for the reasons discussed above in connection with independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that *Nightingale* also does not anticipate amended Claim 9.

Claims 2-6 and 10-13 that depend respectively from independent Claims 1 and 9 are also not anticipated by *Nightingale* at least because they incorporate the limitations of respective Claims 1 and 9 and also they add additional elements that further distinguish *Nightingale*. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-6 and 9-13 be withdrawn.

SECTION 103 REJECTION

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Nightingale* as applied to claim 1 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,721,903 issued to Harsch et al. (hereinafter "*Harsch*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 7 depends from independent Claim 1. As discussed above, independent Claim 1 is patentable over the *Nightingale* reference. Moreover, *Harsch* does not appear to remedy at least the deficiencies of *Nightingale* discussed above. Therefore, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 7 is patentable over the cited references.

NEW CLAIMS

Applicants add new Claims 28-33. New Claims 29-33 depend from independent Claim 28. Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 28-33 are patentable over the cited references and, therefore, are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of new Claims 28-33.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for immediate allowance. For the foregoing reasons and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and full allowance of all pending claims.

No fee is believed due with this Response. If, however, Applicants have overlooked the need for any fee due with this Response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayment associated with this Response to Deposit Account No. 08-2025 of Hewlett-Packard Company.

Respectfully submitted,

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